

The Bowers' Cat Again

She Is the Innocent Cause of Another Spirited Family Disturbance.

TWO VIEWS ON CATNIP

Mrs. Bowser Declares That Feline Creatures Love It, While Mr. Bowser Scoffs.

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DINNER had been finished half an hour, and Mr. Bowser was enjoying his evening paper and cigar, when the family cat wandered up from the basement, looked around for a moment, and then walked over and over on the floor and set up a wailing.
"Now, then, what in thunder ails that old cat?" exclaimed Mr. Bowser, as he laid down his paper.
"He acted like that this afternoon when Mrs. White was in here, and she said he wanted catnip," replied Mrs. Bowser.
"Wanted catnip?"
"Yes. You know what catnip is, don't you?"
"I've heard of a plant called catnip, but what has it to do with cats?"
"A good deal. At certain seasons of the year, particularly in the summer,



MR. BOWSER PUT HIS FIST UNDER THE OTHER'S NOSE.

cats are crazy for it. I've heard it said that they would die if they didn't get it."

"Bosh! What our old cat wants is a blamed good thumping with a club, and he'll get it if he tries any funny business around this house."

"I meant to have got some catnip of the old man who comes along here every week selling it," said Mrs. Bowser, "but he passed yesterday before I could call him. I'll be on the watch for him next Wednesday."

"Are you an idiot, or do you take me for one?"

"I don't know what you mean. What is there to call for such vigorous language?"

"Our old cat comes upstairs and rolls around and meows, and you tell me he wants catnip."

"Well, what of it?"

"What of it? Are you trying to make me believe that because some idiot named a certain plant catnip cats like it or must have it? Don't attempt to get funny, Mrs. Bowser."

"Cats love catnip, and everybody knows it," she replied. "Your mother used to raise it for her cats, and you ought to remember that she did. Would a man come along here selling the plant every week if cats didn't love it?"

"And I say that catnip is a medicinal plant and is used to make poultices of. No human being ever saw a cat taste of it or ever will. You might as well look for them to eat thistles or hay. When a woman of your age will believe such stuff and nonsense it's no wonder I find clothespins scattered all over the place and have to figure on how long I can keep out of the poor house. Catnip! Catnip! I'll catnip that old cat if he gives another yell."

Mrs. Bowser realized that argument would be of no avail, and she had read a page or two in a magazine when Mr. Bowser returned to the attack. He wanted that catnip question settled then and there, and he wanted it settled in his favor.

"You have made certain statements about cats and catnip," he continued, "and I want you to either back them up or admit that you were gaging me. I want your authority for saying that catnip is grown for cats."

"There may be other uses for it as well, but everybody knows that cats love catnip. If a cat is sick, it is better after eating of the plant."

"That won't do, Mrs. Bowser; that won't do at all. I have only your unsupported word. I must have more than that."

"Then go over and ask the druggist, the butcher—ask people on the street. It's a funny thing. You were born on a farm and lived on one until you were fifteen years old and you must have been as familiar with catnip as with burdocks or mayweed. Didn't you ever see a cat eating catnip?"

"I may have, but that proves nothing. I have also seen cats eating hay and corn and oats and fish bones. I never make a positive statement."

you without being able to back it up. Can you find in the encyclopedia that cats must have catnip, or periah? Is there anything bearing on the subject in the history of America? Did Columbus discover cats eating catnip when he landed on these shores? Did the pilgrim fathers bring their cats and catnip along to Plymouth rock? Woman, answer me, or admit that you were trying to belittle your own husband in his own house?"

"All I can say is that cats love catnip," she replied.
"You make that as a plain statement of fact, do you?"
"I do."

"Then I will prove that you don't know what you are talking about and need a guardian."

Mr. Bowser clapped on his hat and took a walk. He knew his family butcher to be an ex-farmer, and he called at his shop and looked around, and then in a casual way inquired:

"Jones, did you use to raise catnip on your farm?"

"The old woman raised a few bunches—just enough for her cats," was the reply.

"How for her cats?"
"Why, cats eat it like fun, particularly about this time o' year. If you have a cat over home and she is all right just let her get at a bunch of catnip."

"And you stand there and tell me that catnip is so called because cats nip at it?"

"I never heard any other reason."

"Then you don't know enough to come in when it rains! Cats and catnip have no more to do with each other than bulls and burdocks. No wonder you can't tell bones from beef!"

"I can tell a jackass when I see one," exclaimed the butcher, and, after glaring at him for a minute, Mr. Bowser snorted in contempt and walked out.

A farmer who had been selling potatoes to the grocer on the corner was just about starting for home, and Mr. Bowser walked up and asked him:

"Say, friend, do you grow any catnip on your farm?"

"Not as a crop," smiled the man.

"Then how do you grow it?"

"A few bunches in the garden for the cats."

"But what has it got to do with cats?"

"Everything. You could have found that out by asking your wife."

Mr. Bowser felt like calling him names and getting up a row, but the agriculturist was in a hurry and was soon driving away. An old man who was leaning against a barrel had overheard the conversation and he now butted in with:

"You must have lived in a catless country not to have heard about catnip."

"Did I ask for your opinion, sir?"

"No, but when I find a man who don't know catnip I feel it my duty to post him. I wouldn't wonder very far from home if I were you. You might get lost."

"You old villain! But for your gray hairs I'd—" And Mr. Bowser put his fist under the other's nose and held it there for a few seconds and then passed on. His family druggist was a proper man to appeal to, but it was ten minutes before the searcher after information entered the store. It was another ten before he asked:

"Doc, do cats eat catnip?"

"Do cows eat grass?" answered the druggist.

"But is it really true that they do?"

"They love it. Catnip is for cats; cats are for catnip. They are one and indivisible. You can bet your last dollar on that."

"But I never heard of such a thing."

"Probably not. I believe there are several things you never heard of. However, you can settle this thing very quickly. Here's a bunch of the stuff I bought for my cat today. She's wandered off somewhere, and you may take it along."

Mr. Bowser took the bunch and walked off. He hadn't got ten feet from the door when a stray cat meowed at his heels. Before reaching the other end of the block he was being followed by two more. Another block and the number was six. When within a hundred feet of his gate, it seemed as if there were twenty wailing, meowing felines around him, all making threats against his life if he did not give up that bunch, and he suddenly became panic stricken and fled.

"Well?" queried Mrs. Bowser as she opened the front door and found him on the steps and breathing heavily.

But he gazed steadily at the rising moon and made no answer. He had been defeated, but he meant to save his honor.

M. QUAD.

Mean of Her.

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By order of the board.

E. Z. FERGUSON, Clerk.

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